

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 08580 260915Z

15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7642

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8580

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, JA

SUBJECT: FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS

REF: SEOUL 8520

1. ROK PRESS CONTINUES TO FEATURE DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS. GENERAL THRUST OF ARTICLES HAS BEEN POSITIVE, WITH PRESS EMPHASIZING FONMIN MIYAZAWA'S DECEMBER 24 DIET TESTIMONY CAUTIONING AGAINST PREMATURE TIES WITH NORTH KOREA AND PRIMIN MIKI'S COMPLETE SETTLEMENT OF KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE. PRESS ALSO PROMINENTLY CARRIED ARTICLE ON ROK-JAPAN MINISTERIAL MEETING WHICH INCLUDED SPECULATION THAT MEETING WOULD BE HELD AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE IN LIGHT OF ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS IN TWO COUNTRIES' RELATIONSHIP SINCE MIKI TOOK OFFICE.

2. ON OTHER HAND, PRESS HAS ALSO PROMINENTLY REPORTED DECISION OF OSAKA POLICE TO DEACTIVATE HEADQUARTERS WHICH HAD BEEN INVESTIGATING ASPECTS OF MUN SE-KWANG CASE, AS WELL AS DECEMBER 26 STATEMENT BY MOFA THAT INVESTIGATION MUST BE CONTINUED EVEN IF HEADQUARTERS DISBANDED, BECAUSE THERE "ARE MANY PROBLEMS THAT SHOULD BE EXAMINED CLOSELY IN THE BACKGROUND OF THE INCIDENT."

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PAGE 02 SEOUL 08580 260915Z

3. MOFA NORTHEAST ASIA DIVISION I (JAPAN) CHIEF WOO MUN-KI

TOLD EMBOFF DECEMBER 26 THAT CLOSING OF OSAKA OFFICE
HAD BLUNTED THE IMPACT OF MORE FAVORABLE JAPANESE GESTURES
AND STATEMENTS, INCLUDING THOSE REPORTED REFTEL. HOWEVER,
HE SAID THAT MOFA STATEMENT, WHICH HE HAD DRAFTED, HAD
BEEN CAREFULLY DESIGNED TO EXPRESS MODERATE REACTION BY
ROKG, WHICH WANTS JAPAN TO KEEP INVESTIGATION OPEN. UNLESS
GENUINE INVESTIGATION IS PURSUED, WOO SAID, ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS
CANNOT BE COMPLETELY NORMALIZED.
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